

Appin. No. 10/766,384

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1824
Visteon Disclosure No. V203-0076**II. Remarks**

Claims 9-11 are pending and rejected. Claim 9 has been amended as discussed below. With the amendments and remarks provided herewith, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections.

Claim 9 has been amended for clarification purposes to recite a preloaded bearing assembly "preloaded and maintained about the detachable body" and the stepped boss and the roll formed face engaging the bearing assembly "to maintain the preload about the detachable body when the detachable half shaft assembly is detached from the shaft bell or the disc rotor." Support for these limitations may be found in the specification of the present application on paragraphs [0013], [0014], [0018], [0024], and [0027]. Thus, no new matter has been added.

The present claimed invention provides a more serviceable part by saving time during the service of the vehicle wheel end and avoiding possible service error when being serviced. In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, the detachable half shaft assembly 12 includes a detachable body 20 and a preloaded bearing assembly 22 preloaded about the detachable body 20 to be attached to a knuckle 21. *Specification of present application, paragraph [0013].* The bearing assembly is preloaded about the detachable body 20 during roll forming of the roll formed face 38. *Paragraph [0014].* The preload of the preloaded bearing assembly 22 is maintained by the continuous engagement with the stepped boss 36 and the roll formed face 38, even during service of the wheel end. *Id.* Thus, when the vehicle wheel end is to be serviced, the detachable half shaft assembly may be detached from either or both the shaft bell and the disc rotor. *Paragraph [0024].* This is advantageous and is more time efficient than other wheel end assemblies, since the preload on the bearing assembly is not affected and therefore preload

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thereon is maintained. *Id.* As a result, this saves time during the service of the vehicle wheel end and avoids possible service error when being serviced. *Id.*

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C § 102(b)

Responsive to the rejections of claims 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,158,124 to Austin ("*Austin*"), *Austin* fails to teach each and every element of the subject matter as claimed in amended claim 9 of the present application. A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. As mentioned above, amended claim 9 now recites a preloaded bearing assembly "preloaded and maintained about the detachable body." Moreover, the stepped boss and the roll formed face engages the bearing assembly "to maintain the preload about the detachable body when the detachable half shaft assembly is detached from the shaft bell or the disc rotor." Contrarily, *Austin* discloses that the bearing assembly is preloaded to the rotor 26. *Austin* discloses a bearing assembly "preloaded between the inner race member 58 and inner hub 14." See *Austin* at col. 3, lines 15-20 and Figs. 1, 3 and 4. Screws 66 hold inner hub 14 to rotor 26 when the rotor 26 is detached from the drive shaft 24. See Fig. 4. Thus, the bearing assembly in *Austin* is preloaded to the rotor 26, whereas the bearing assembly as recited in claim 9 in the present application is preloaded and maintained about the detachable body (shaft).

Moreover, claims 10-11 generally depend from claim 9. Thus, claims 10-11 are allowable for the reasons provided above.

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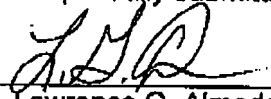
Conclusion

Thus, claims 9-11 are in a condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,



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